FIRST COMICS
LIMITED SERIES
NO.1 of 6

MICHAEL MOORCOCK'S

ELRIC

THE VANISHING TOWER

AUG. $1.75
NO.1
$2.45 CANADA

ROY THOMAS AND JAN DUURSEMA

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WHO ARE THESE GUYS, ANYWAY?

The Bright Empire of **Melniboné** stood for ten thousand years, ruled by its inhuman sorceror-kings with magic and dragon-fire — for the emperors of Melniboné preserved and extended their power by pacts with the gods of the ancient earth.

Four hundred twenty-eighth and *last* to sit on the Ruby Throne in Dreaming Imrryr was the albino, **Elric**. A weak and sickly child, kept alive by sorcery and drugs, he was unlike his subjects for he alone possessed a conscience, though he often chose not to heed it.

When his throne was usurped by his mad cousin, **Yyrkoon**, and his beloved **Cymoril** placed in a sorcerous sleep, Elric was manipu - lated by **Arioch**, a god of Chaos, into claiming **Stormbringer**, one of the twin runeblades. With the sword, Elric needed no longer fear his weakness, for Stormbringer was alive and in drinking souls would share its stolen life with him. So for vengeance and love, Elric lead an armada of the Young Kingdoms of Men against Melniboné. But Fate and the gods betrayed him, for while he destroyed Yyrkoon he was also responsible, albeit unwillingly, for razing Imrryr and for Cymoril's death.

Now Elric — kinslayer, womanslayer and traitor — is a wanderer in the domains of men. Hated by his scattered subjects and feared by humans, his only companion is **Moonglum of Elwher**.

LAST SERIES: Theleb K'Aarna, a sorceror of Pan Tang, in jealousy over **Queen Yishanna** of Jharkor's passion for Elric, attempted to kill him. Elric now rides with a reluctant Moonglum for vengeance.

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A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

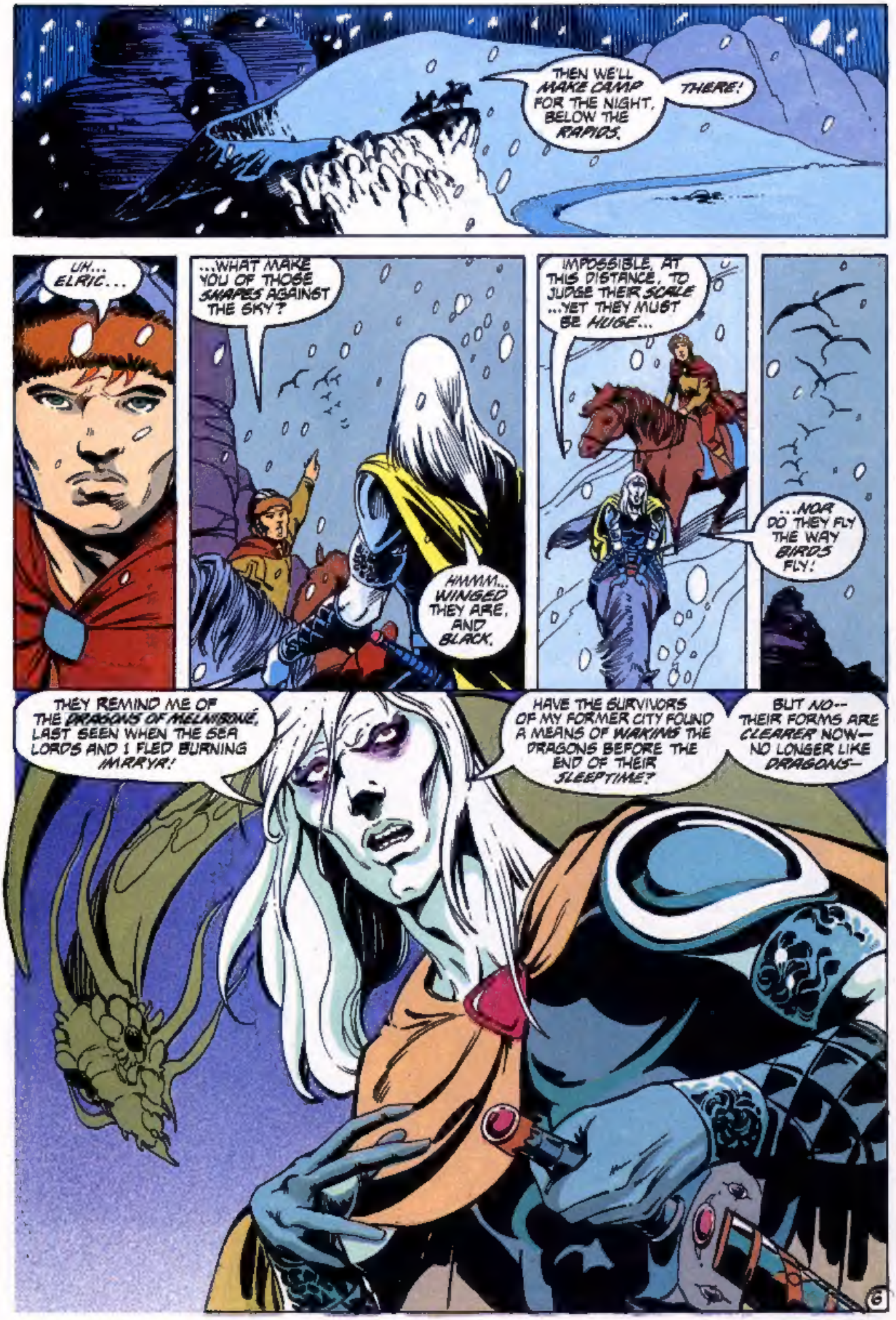
Strange Shapes Winging...
Beginning
The Adaptation of
MICHAEL MOORCOCK'S
The Vanishing Tower
the fourth novel of
ELRIC OF MELNIBONÉ
and his runesword
STORMBRINGER
by
Roy Thomas
scriptor
Jan Duursema
illustrator
Carrie Spiegle
letterer
Lovern Kindzierski
colorist
Laurel Fitch
editor
I STILL DON'T THINK ALL THIS SKULKING ABOUT IS NECESSARY, ELRIC.
WHY COULD WE NOT HAVE DISEMBARKED AT TRAPESAZ--OR AT LEAST SOME FISHING HARBOR BOASTING AN INN?
BECAUSE, FRIEND MOONGLUM, I WISH OUR ARRIVAL IN LORMYR TO BE SECRET.

IF THE MAGE THELEB K'AARNA KNEW OF MY COMING—AS HE SOON WOULD, IF WE WENT TO TREPESAZ--THEN HE WOULD FLEE AGAIN, AND THE CHASE WOULD BEGIN AFRESH.
WOULD YOU PREFER THAT TO A SINGLE EVENING SPENT IN AN OPEN BOAT 'NEATH COLD AUTUMN WINDS?
NOT WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY.
BUT I STILL FEEL YOUR PURSUIT OF THIS WIZARD IS NO MORE THAN A SURROGATE FOR REAL ACTIVITY.
YOU SEEK HIM MERELY FOR THE TROUBLE HE'S CAUSED YOU--AND BECAUSE YOU DO NOT WISH TO SEEK YOUR REAL DESTINY.
AND WHAT OF IT?
YOU NEED NOT ACCOMPANY ME IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO.
AYE, I KNOW. PERHAPS I STAY WITH YOU FOR THE SAME REASONS YOU PURSUE THE SORCERER OF PAN TANG.
STILL, WHEN THIS BUSINESS IS DONE, WHAT SAY WE HEAD FOR JADMAR AND SEE WHAT MOOD THE WARMER CLIME PUTS US IN?
ELRIC...?

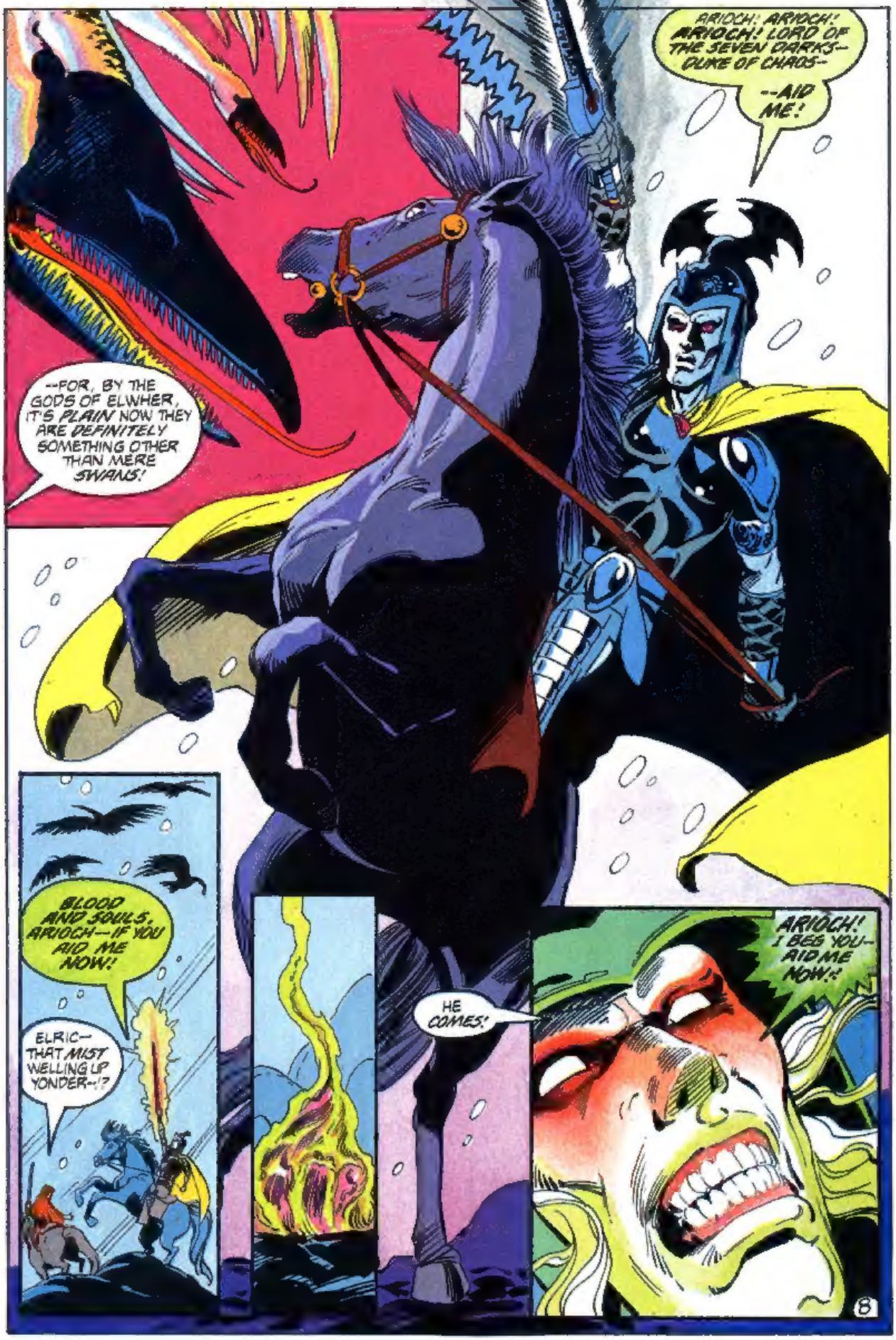
WELL, HERE WE ARE, MY LORD --THE LORMYRIAN SHORE, AS PROMISED--YOU AND YOUR HORSES.
ER--THE CAP'N SAID YOU'D PAY ME AT THIS POINT...
YES.
WILL THIS DO?
XIOMBARG'S BLOOD-- I'VE NEVER SEEN SO FINE A GEM!
ELRIC--THAT JEWEL WAS WORTH A HUNDRED TIMES THE COST OF OUR PASSAGE!
WHAT OF IT?
MY FRIEND, IF I HAD NOT TAKEN THE PRECAUTION OF RETAINING SOME PROFIT FROM THE SALE OF THAT CAPTURED SHIP WE AUCTIONED IN DHAKOS-- WE'D BE PAUPERS NOW!
AYE... NOW COME!
WHY DO I GET THE FEELING YOU NEVER LISTEN TO ME?
3

DAWN...
THANK THE GODS! I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE SO GLAD TO SEE EVEN A NORTHERN SUN.
NOW MAY I KNOW PRECISELY WHERE WE ARE BOUND, MY LORD?
SINCE THELEB K'AARNA MUST NEEDS LIVE OFF RICH PATRONS, HE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY GO TO IOSAE, CAPITAL OF LORMYR.
HE WILL SEEK SERVICE WITH SOME NOBLE-- PERHAPS EVEN WITH KING MONTAN HIMSELF.
THELEB K'AARNA COULD WORK MUCH MISCHIEF HERE.
MORE REASON TO FIND HIM ERE HE BEGINS TO STIR HIS BREW OF CORRUPTION.
MIDDAY...
I'M FINISHED, ELRIC. THAT VILLAGE--
NO. THE WIZARD MAY HAVE FRIENDLY EYES THERE.
I SUPPOSE. THIS PLACE REMINDS ME OF THE PEACEFUL HILLS OF ELWHER, MY OWN LAND.
ALL I KNOW IS, THE SOONER WE REACH A CITY WITH A DECENT TAVERN AND A WARM FIRE, THE BETTER!
TOWARD DUSK...
THE WINDS RISE! SO MUCH FOR PEACEABLENESS, EH?
LORMYR'S TRUE TURBULENCE ENDED WHEN SHE CAST OFF MELNIBONE'S SHACKLES ...AND BECAME THE FIRST TO PROCLAIM HERSELF A FREE NATION.
THEN PRAY THELEB K'AARNA'S SOUL IS SOON SENT TO LIMBO..
...FOR THEN I'LL BE CONTENT TO SIT BEFORE THE FIRE ALL WINTER LONG, IF IT SUIT YOU!
4

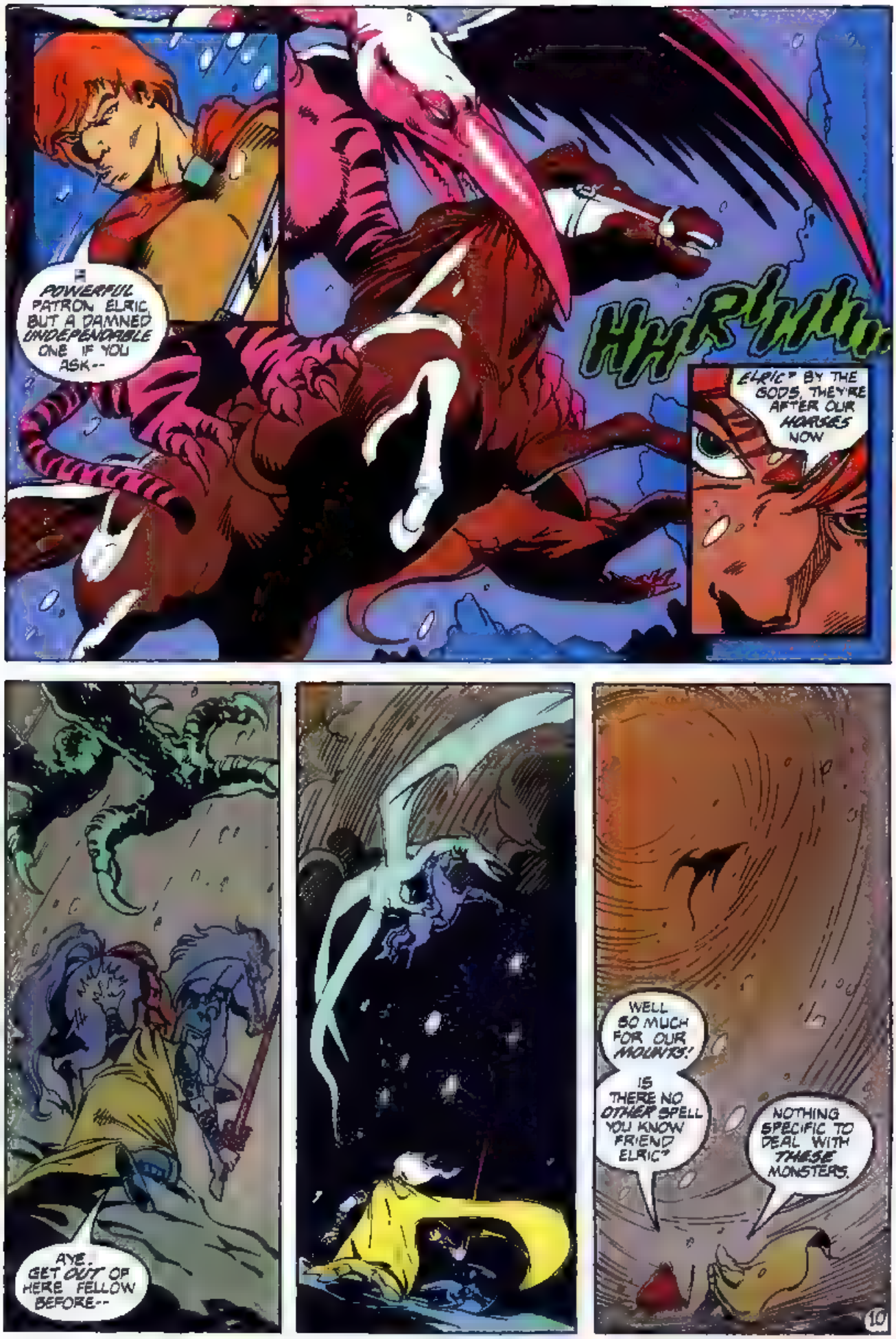
AFTER THREE DAYS TRAVELING...
I KNOW LORMYR IS FAMOUS FOR HER GREAT RIVERS, MY LORD— BUT DID ONE HAVE TO TO BLOCK OUR PATH?
'TIS THE SCHLAN RIVER, MOONGLUM... FAR TOO ROUGH TO CROSS ON HORSEBACK AT THIS POINT.
THOSE FISHERMEN SEEM FRIENDLY. COULD WE NOT BORROW ONE OF THEIR BOATS?
MEN OF THE SCHLAN ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR GOSSIPING.
NEWS OF OUR PRESENCE MIGHT WELL PRECEDE US AND WARN THELEB K'AARNA.
I HAVE LOST HIM TOO OFTEN ALREADY!
THE OLD TOWN OF STAGASAZ LIES AHEAD, WHERE THIS TRIBUTARY JOINS THE MAIN RIVER.
WHEN WE SIGHT HER, YOU CAN GO INTO TOWN TO BUY A SMALL BOAT IN WHICH WE CAN SAIL UP THE TAPHRA-TREPEK...TO IOSAZ.
BUT IT'S GETTING DARK, ELRIC. WE'LL NEVER REACH STAGASAZ BY NIGHTFALL.
6


THEN WE'LL MAKE CAMP FOR THE NIGHT, BELOW THE RAPIDS.
THERE!
UH... ELRIC...
...WHAT MAKE YOU OF THOSE SHAPES AGAINST THE SKY?
HMMM... WINGED THEY ARE, AND BLACK.
IMPOSSIBLE, AT THIS DISTANCE, TO JUDGE THEIR SCALE ...YET THEY MUST BE HUGE...
...NOR DO THEY FLY THE WAY BIRDS FLY!
THEY REMIND ME OF THE DRAGONS OF MELNIBONÉ, LAST SEEN WHEN THE SEA LORDS AND I FLED BURNING IMRRYR!
HAVE THE SURVIVORS OF MY FORMER CITY FOUND A MEANS OF WAKING THE DRAGONS BEFORE THE END OF THEIR SLEEPTIME?
BUT NO-- THEIR FORMS ARE CLEARER NOW— NO LONGER LIKE DRAGONS—
6

DRAW YOUR SWORDS, FRIEND MOONGLUM! FOR THESE ARE THE OONAI--- SHAPE-CHANGERS---
--CREATURES OF CHAOS, SET UPON US BY THELEB K'AARNA.
SOME OF MY ANCESTORS HAD THE POWER TO MASTER THEM--
--BUT LIKE GREAT MULTI-COLORED SWANS, THEIR FEATHERS GLEAMING IN THE SHARDS OF TWILIGHT!
--BUT I THOUGHT NO MERE CONJURER OF PAN TANG COULD MASTER THE CHIMERAE!
DO YOU KNOW NO SPELL TO COUNTER THEM?
NO.
THEN CALL YOUR GOD, ARIOCH, I BEG YOU!
THE OONAI MUST FILL YOU WITH GREAT FEAR INDEED--
--IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO ENTERTAIN THE PRESENCE OF THE DUKE OF CHAOS!
PERHAPS THESE SHAPE-CHANGERS HAVE NO BUSINESS WITH US, LORD ELRIC.
BUT IT IS WELL TO BE PREPARED, IS IT NOT--
7


ARIOCH! ARIOCH! ARIOCH! LORD OF THE SEVEN DARKS-- DUKE OF CHAOS--
--AID ME!
--FOR, BY THE GODS OF ELWHER, IT'S PLAIN NOW THEY ARE DEFINITELY SOMETHING OTHER THAN MERE SWANS!
BLOOD AND SOULS, ARIOCH--IF YOU AID ME NOW!
ELRIC--THAT MIST WELLING UP YONDER--!?
HE COMES!
ARIOCH! I BEG YOU--AID ME NOW!
8

AAROOOH!
GREETINGS ELRIC. .MOST BELOVED OF MY CHILDREN.
I BUT CAME TO OFFER MY BLESSINGS.
AR OCH-- I BEG THEE--!
REMEMBER YOUR OATH TO CHAOS, AND REMAIN LOYAL TO US IN SPITE OF ALL.
AH THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE, SWEETEST OF MY SLAVES THERE ARE OTHER MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS AFOOT IN THE REALM OF CHAOS.
AID ME GREAT AR OCH
HE IS GONE--
--AND THE CHIMERAE COME EVER CLOSER!
9


POWERFUL PATRON ELRIC BUT A DAMNED UNDEPENDABLE ONE IF YOU ASK--
HRRUUU
ELRIC" BY THE GODS, THEY'RE AFTER OUR HORSES NOW
AYE. GET OUT OF HERE FELLOW BEFORE--
WELL SO MUCH FOR OUR MOUNTS!
IS THERE NO OTHER SPELL YOU KNOW FRIEND ELRIC"
NOTHING SPECIFIC TO DEAL WITH THESE MONSTERS.
10

THE OONAI ALWAYS SERVED THE FOLK OF MELNIBONE. NEVER THREATENED US--SO WE NEEDED NO SPELL AGAINST THEM.
THEY ALWAYS ATTACK INDIVIDUALLY, NEVER IN A PACK.
I KNOW NOT WHY..
NOW THIS ONE HAS TAKEN THE SHAPE OF AN ELEPHANT, WITH THE HEAD OF A CROCODILE...
...NOT AN AESTHETIC COMBINATION.
NEVER MIND WHETHER YOU FIND IT PRETTY OR NOT?
CAN YOU KILL IT WITH THAT RUNESWORD OF YOURS, OR NOT?
I AM NOT SURE.
LET US SEE.
YES IT APPEARS I CAN
EVEN THOUGH IT CHANGE ITS SHAPE TO A DRAGON'S.
AND THIS BLACK PIGLIKE CARCASS, THEN MUST BE HOW I TRULY LOOK.
«MMMPH!
NO WONDER IT WANTED TO CHANGE ITS FORM.

FIRST NOTES

A FIRST RATE JOB

A couple months back I wrote a column about ratings systems for comics, stating, "First Comics is a dependable, *responsible* publisher, interested in *expanding* the comics market, not restricting it," and "If a rating system is imposed on comics, it won't be because of anything published by First Comics."

Since then I've re-considered my stance because it suddenly dawned on me that there's nothing like a nice, hot controversy to increase circulation — and the current debate on ratings for comics is generating enough BTUs to heat my house for the next two years.

Let's face it, we're not going to get a heck of a lot of ink in the press if we continue to do the same old thing. This reliability tag is getting to be quite a millstone. I mean, what kind of coverage do you think we'll get with a press release that proclaims: FIRST COMICS CONTINUES TO NOT USE RATING SYSTEM! Or how about: FIRST FAILS TO SET PRECEDENT BY MAINTAINING STANDARDS!

Obviously, that's not going to get us anywhere. Maybe if we snuck it in with some real earth-shattering news — like an announcement that the next issue of Nexus is going to ship three minutes late — it would get front page coverage. But what we really need here is a *gimmick*. Something unpredictable. Something totally unnecessary. Something that will make people buy our books just to find out what all the fuss is about.

And a rating system is just the ticket. Furthermore, I'm convinced that a judiciously worded rating system could, quite possibly, be constructed to appease virtually everyone from Jerry Falwell to Hugh Hefner!

Yes, you can have your comics *and* eat them too (thereby destroying the evidence). And with that goal in mind (appeasing everyone, not eating comics), I have devised a First Rating System which I intend to propose to our Publisher as soon as I figure out what it means.

Intergalactic: Suitable for all species throughout the known universe. This would apply to virtually everything we currently publish and anything we may contemplate publishing in the near future for two reasons: 1) We are not likely to encounter any extraterrestrial lifeforms in the near future, and 2) If we do, they are not likely to know enough about our culture to even understand, much less be offended by, our books.

***Intragalactic*:** Similar to above, but does not guarantee that sentients from outside the Milky Way will not take exception to the graphic depiction of humans wearing clothes that will be grossly out of vogue by the time they get here.

Interspecies: Nothing here to offend dogs, cats, iguanas, or any other creature on the planet that can neither read nor comprehend two-dimensional objects.

Humanoid: Looks kind of like a human being, but isn't. Since there aren't any of these that we currently know of, this is a dandy catchall category for any of those tricky, borderline cases.

None of the Above: Another shameless marketing ploy. This rating requires that you purchase at least one book containing each of the aforementioned ratings simply to ascertain what it is *not*. Then, of course, you feel compelled to buy the damn thing to find out what it *is*.

All of the Above: A trick answer when it follows "None of the Above." Don't fall for it!

Danger! Toxic! Fatal If Swallowed: Guaranteed to attract maximum attention. Absolutely irresistable — especially if you hide it under the kitchen sink.

Well, that's it. I think it pretty much covers all the bases — except, of course, the ones with *people* standing on them. We'll let them decide for themselves.

— Rick Oliver

FIRST IN APRIL

American Flagg! #43: Reuben finally reaches the mythical land of California, and hopes to find the peace he seeks. While Mandy wonders why she let him leave at all, as events in Chicago reach a violent climax. By **J Marc DeMatteis** and **Mark Badger**.

Badger #26: They only come out at night. An army of cockroaches — all under the mysterious power of one man. Badger must crawl through the Chicago sewers to corral the "Roach Wrangler." By **Mike Baron** and **Bill Reinhold**. Plus Clonezone by Baron and **Mark A. Nelson**. Deluxe series.

Dynamo Joe #10: This time the enemy's target is a defenseless farming planet where over a half million civilians are at the mercy of a giant planet-eating Mellenares machine! By **Phil Foglio**, **Ben Dunn** and **Brian Thomas.** Plus Cargonauts by Foglio and **Paul Guinan**.

Elric: The Vanishing Tower #1: First welcomes artist **Jan Duursema**, as Elric begins a journey of vengeance. Adapted from the novel by **Michael Moorcock**. Script by **Roy Thomas**. Deluxe, bi-monthly series.

Grimjack #37: John Gaunt's friends gather for a funeral. But there's still a killer out there who must face "The Revenge of John Gaunt." By **John Ostrander** and **Tom Mandrake**. And Munden's Bar by Ostrander and **Robb Phipps.**

Jon Sable, Freelance #50: The First 50th issue. Maggie the Cat returns to the U.S.A. to supplement her income with a dangerous heist — and winds up asking Sable for help. It seems she has the Mob on her tail! By **Mike Grell** and **Robb Phipps**. Deluxe series.

Nexus #35: Refugees come to Nexus' haven on Ylum to escape tryanny. But some bring oppression with them — as the innocent "Newcomer" soon discovers. By **Mike Baron, Steve Rude** and **John Nyberg**. And Tales of Judah by **Roger Sallick** and **Robb Phipps.** Deluxe series.

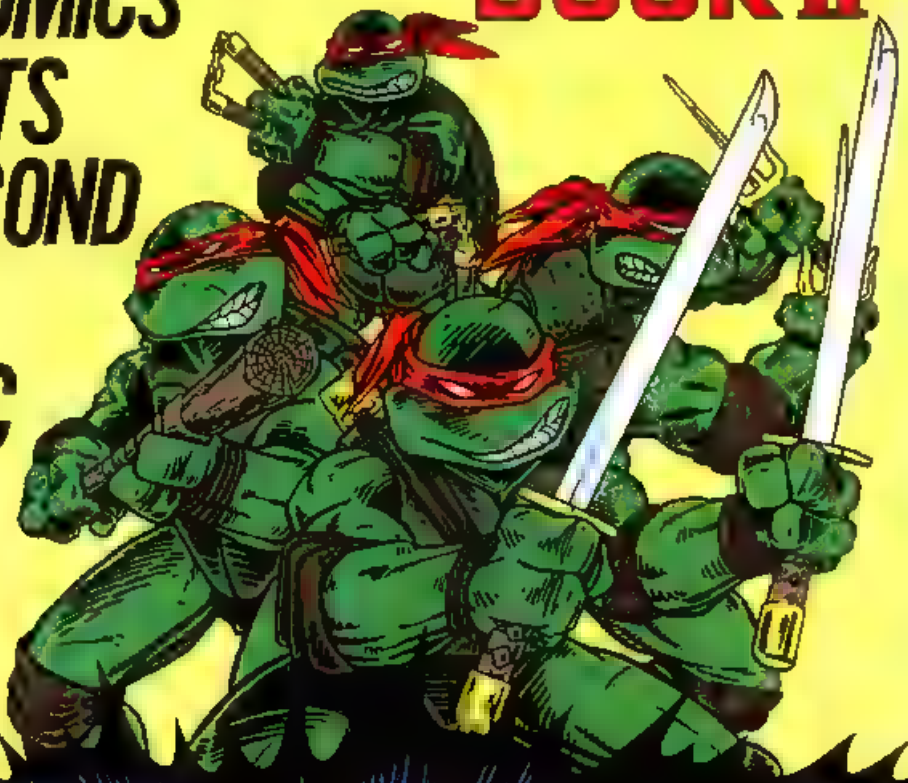
Shatter #10: Shatter's back in Chicago. Using all his new RNA-enhanced abilities, he's out to have some fun, kick some butt and clean-up the town! By **Peter A. Gillis** and **Charlie Athanas**. Deluxe, bi-monthly series.

Whisper #8: Even the smallest act can have disastrous consequences — as Diane's defense of a Japanese grocer propels Whisper to the center of an escalating gang war. By **Steven Grant** and **Norm Breyfogle.** Bi-monthly series.

EASTMAN AND LAIRD'S TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

BOOK II

FIRST COMICS PRESENTS THE SECOND TMNT GRAPHIC NOVEL IN FULL COLOR!



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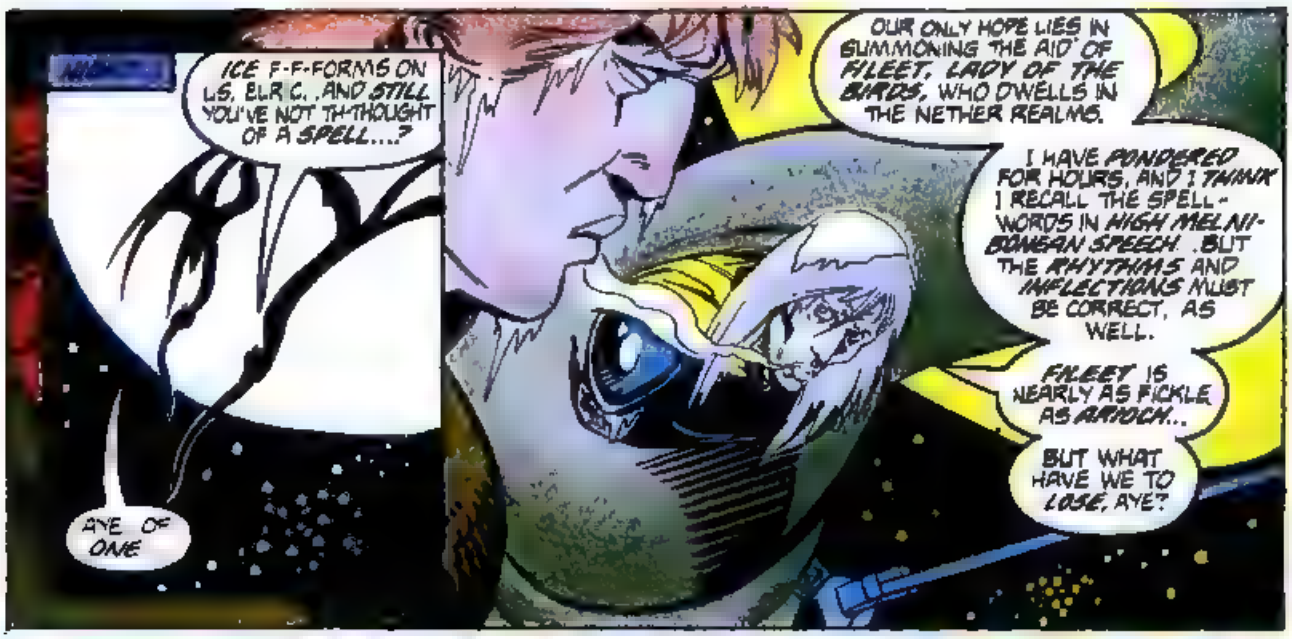
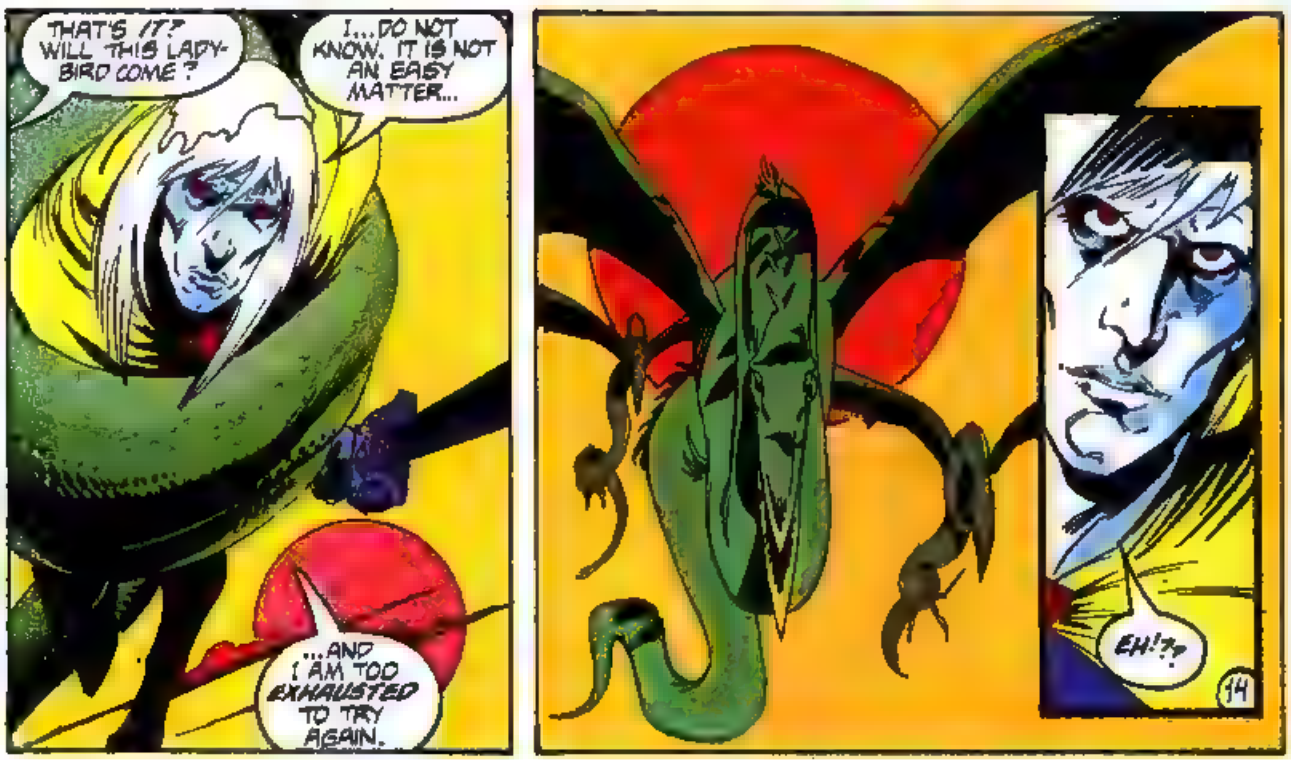
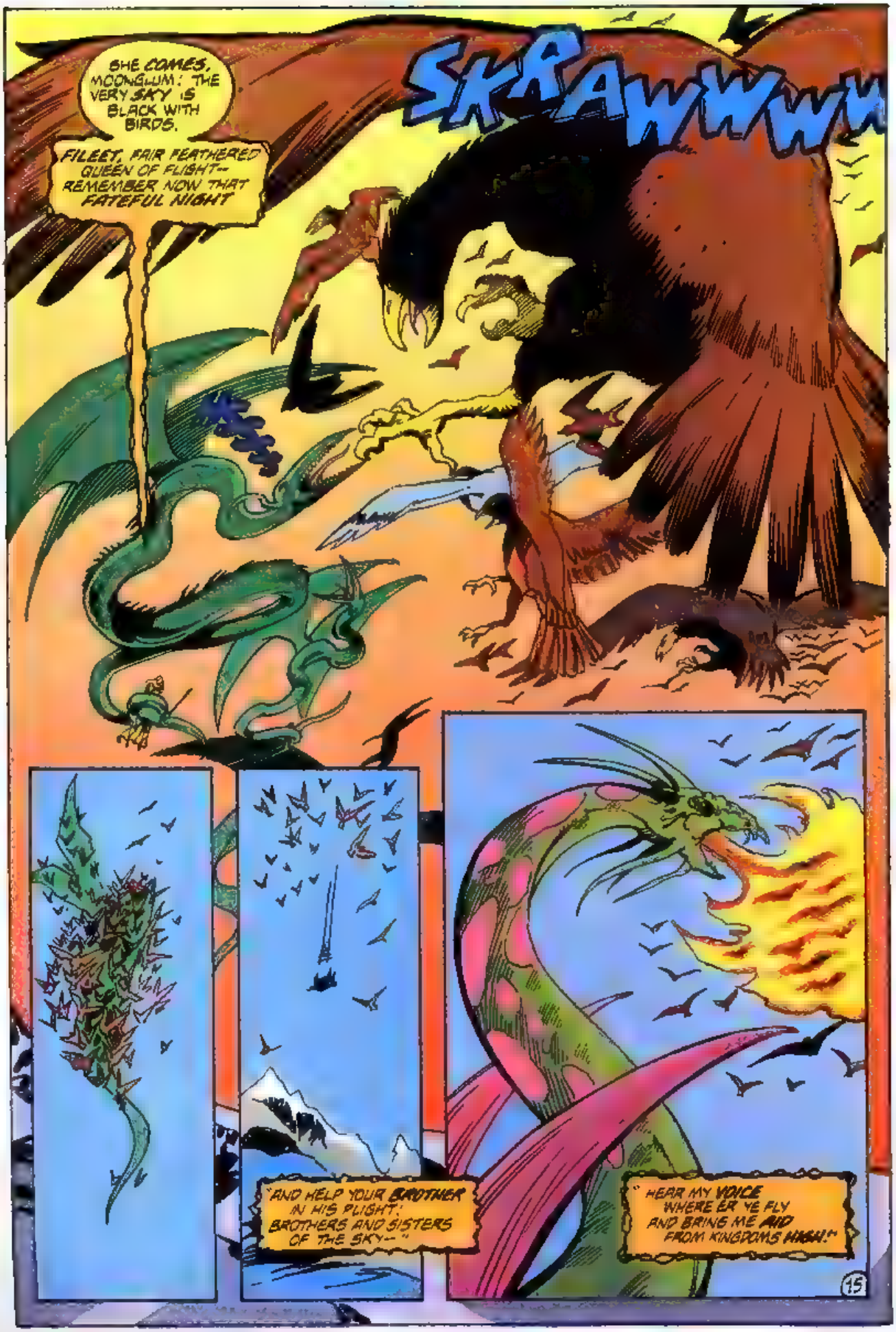
NO. ALREADY IT ALTERS ITS SHAPE AS IT LANDS, INTO...
...A CHILD!?
STRIKE, MOONGLUM.
DON'T WORRY, ELRIC--
I'LL NOT LET ITS MASK OF INNOCENCE DETER ME.
ELRIC! HERE COMES ANOTHER!
I SEE IT... LIKE A GREAT FANGED WHALE WITH WINGS!
IT'S DOWN-- BUT IT CHANGES AGAIN!
AND IT WILL KEEP ON CHANGING TILL IT FINDS A SHAPE WE CANNOT DEFEAT--
--UNLESS--
--WE CUT IT IN TWAIN!
12

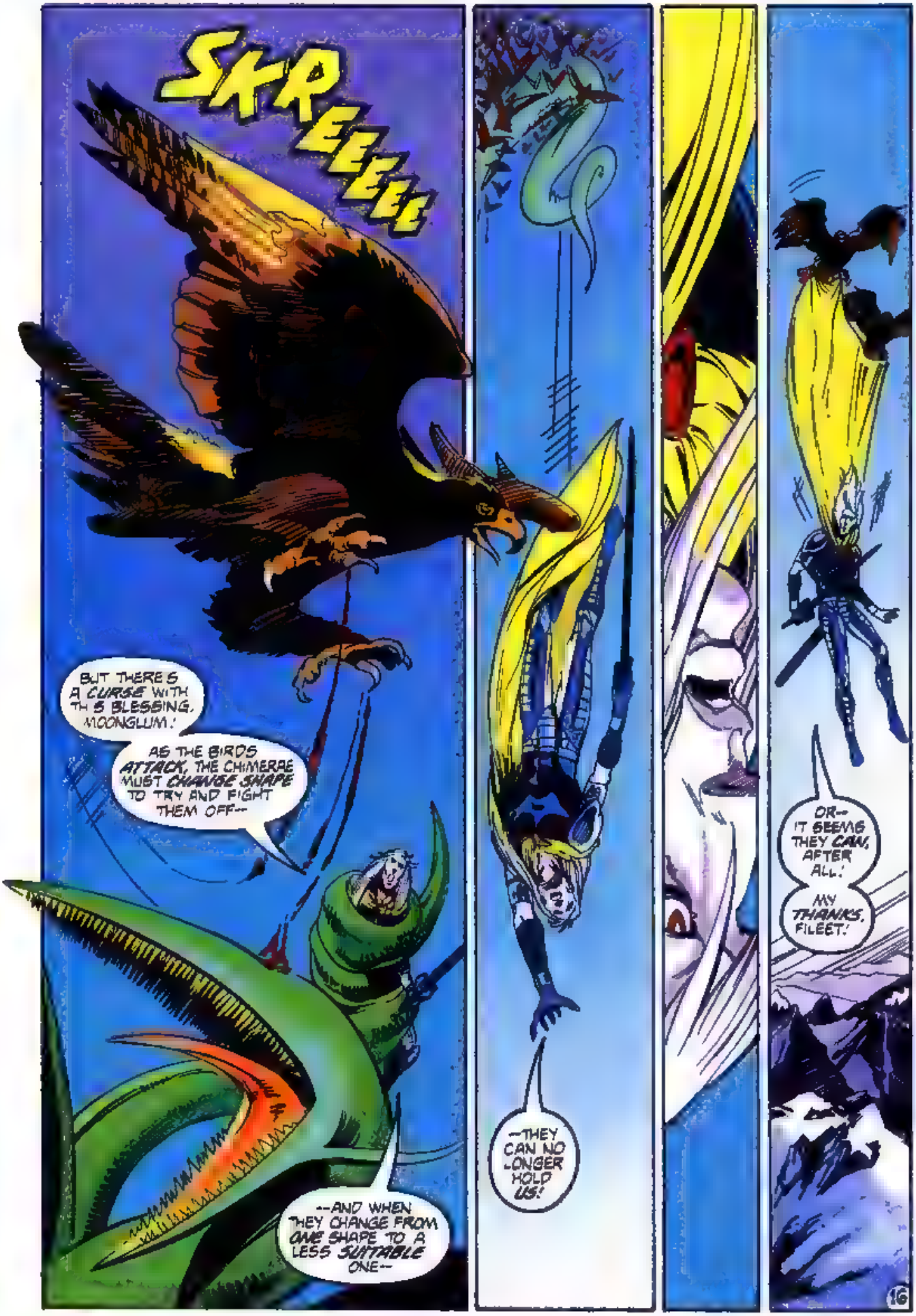
WHAT? ANOTHER ONE?!
'IS THERE NO END TO THEM?
UNNGH! THEY HAVE BRUISED OUR SKILL, MOONGLUM-- AND THUS PINIONED MY ARMS!
ELRIC! I'M COMING E.R.C I'M--
--COMING
TH-THEY'RE NOT SLAYING US, ELRIC. WHERE ARE THEY TAKING US?
DON'T YOU SEE? WE ARE BEING CARRIED NORTHWARD, OVER THE LORMYRIAN STEPPE.
DOUBTLESS THELEB K'AARNA AWAITS US AT THE END OF OUR JOURNEY...
...AND HE HAS ALWAYS PROMISED ME A SLOW DEATH
13


ICE F-F-FORMS ON LS, BLR C. . AND STILL YOU'VE NOT TH-THOUGHT OF A SPELL....?
AYE. OF ONE
OUR ONLY HOPE LIES IN SUMMONING THE AID OF FILEET, LADY OF THE BIRDS, WHO DWELLS IN THE NETHER REALMS.
I HAVE PONDERED FOR HOURS, AND I THINK I RECALL THE SPELL-WORDS IN HIGH MELNIBONEAN SPEECH. BUT THE RHYTHMS AND INFLECTIONS MUST BE CORRECT, AS WELL.
FILEET IS NEARLY AS FICKLE AS ARIOCH...
BUT WHAT HAVE WE TO LOSE, AYE?

FEATHERS FINE OUR FATES ENTWINED...
BIRD AND MAN... AND THINE AND MINE...
...FORMED A PACT THAT GODS DIVINE...
WHEN KIND SWORE SERVICE UNTO KIND!


THAT'S IT? WILL THIS LADY-BIRD COME?
I...DO NOT KNOW. IT IS NOT AN EASY MATTER...
...AND I AM TOO EXHAUSTED TO TRY AGAIN.
EH!?
14


SHE COMES, MOONGLUM: THE VERY SKY IS BLACK WITH BIRDS.
FILEET, FAIR FEATHERED QUEEN OF FLIGHT-- REMEMBER NOW THAT FATEFUL NIGHT
SKRAWWW
"AND HELP YOUR BROTHER IN HIS PLIGHT: BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE SKY--"
" HEAR MY VOICE WHERE ER YE FLY AND BRING ME AID FROM KINGDOMS HIGH!"
15


SKREEEEE!
BUT THERE'S A CURSE WITH TH'S BLESSING, MOONGLUM!
AS THE BIRDS ATTACK, THE CHIMERAE MUST CHANGE SHAPE TO TRY AND FIGHT THEM OFF--
--AND WHEN THEY CHANGE FROM ONE SHAPE TO A LESS SUITABLE ONE--
--THEY CAN NO LONGER HOLD US!
OR-- IT SEEMS THEY CAN, AFTER ALL!
MY THANKS, FILEET!

AGAIN I THANK THEE, FILEET...
'TWOULD SEEM THEY FEEL YOUR FRIEND DESERVES A SOFT SNOW-SPOT TO LAND IN, TOO, ELRIC.
...ESPECIALLY AS YOUR FEATHERED ONES DROP THE ONNAI FROM FAR HIGHER ALTITUDES.
I AM MIGHTILY PLEASED YOU REMEMBERED THE SPELL, MY LORD...INTONATIONS AND ALL.
THERE GO OUR RESCUERS. COULDN'T YOU ASK THEM TO FLY US SOMEWHERE?
THE ANCIENT BARGAIN BETWEEN MY ANCESTORS AND FILEET DOES NOT COVER MATTERS OF MERE TRANSPORTATION, LITTLE FRIEND.
THEN WHERE TO NOW? FOR WE ARE MOST SURELY LOST.
WE DO NOT KNOW IF THELEB K'AARNA MEANT THE ONNAI TO CARRY US TO HIM.. OR AS FAR FROM HIM AS POSSIBLE.
THUS, WE CONTINUE SOUTH, TO REPLENISH OUR PROVISIONS AND INQUIRE OF THE MAGICIAN'S WHEREABOUTS...
...AND TRY TO REACH IOSAZ, BEFORE WE BOTH FREEZE TO DEATH.
A FAINT HOPE, ELRIC.
AYE. A FAINT HOPE..
17

MICHAEL MOORCOCK'S

The Hawkmoon

Sword of the Dawn

BY ROGER SALICK AND RAFAEL KAYANAN

Cover painting by

DAVE DORMAN

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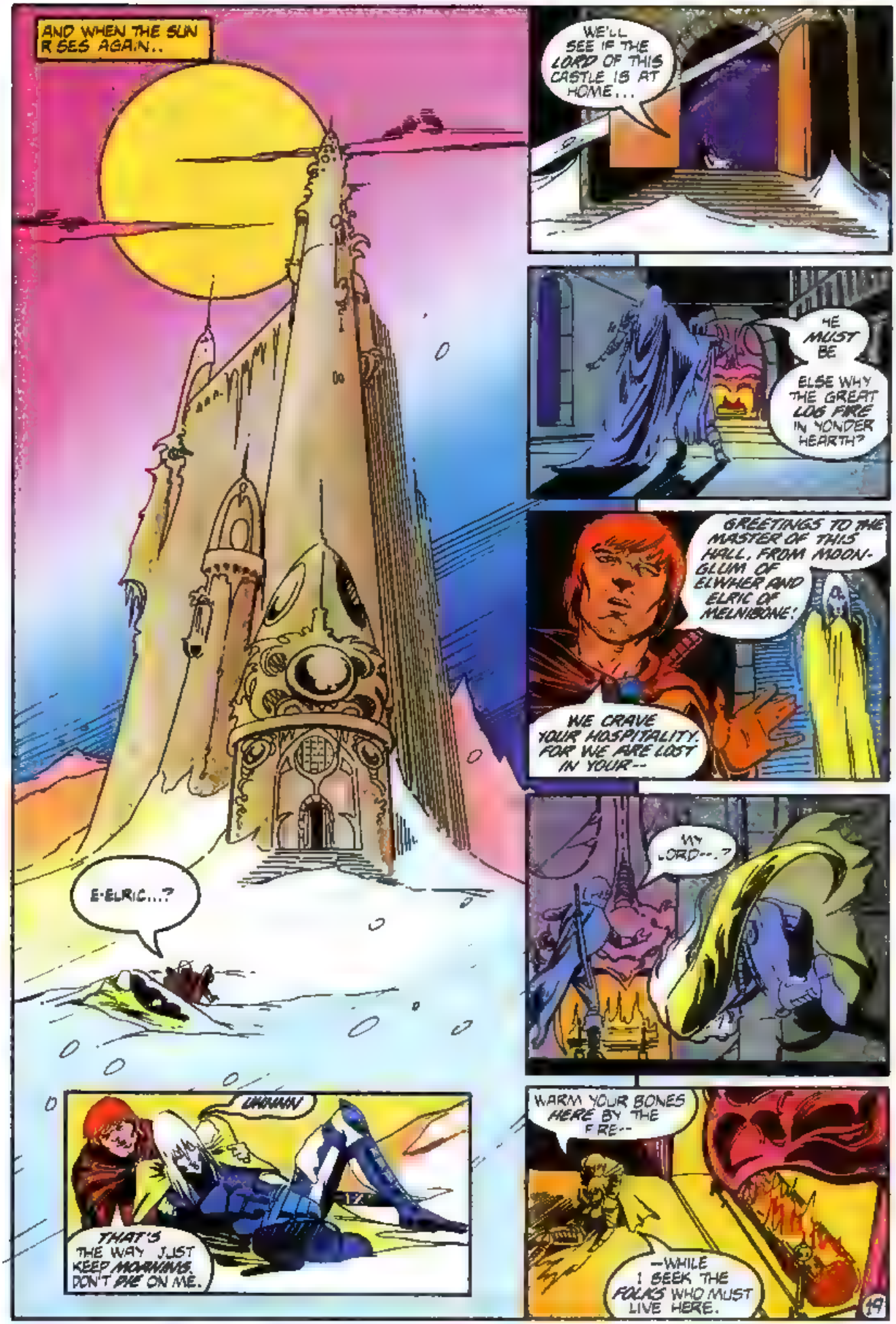
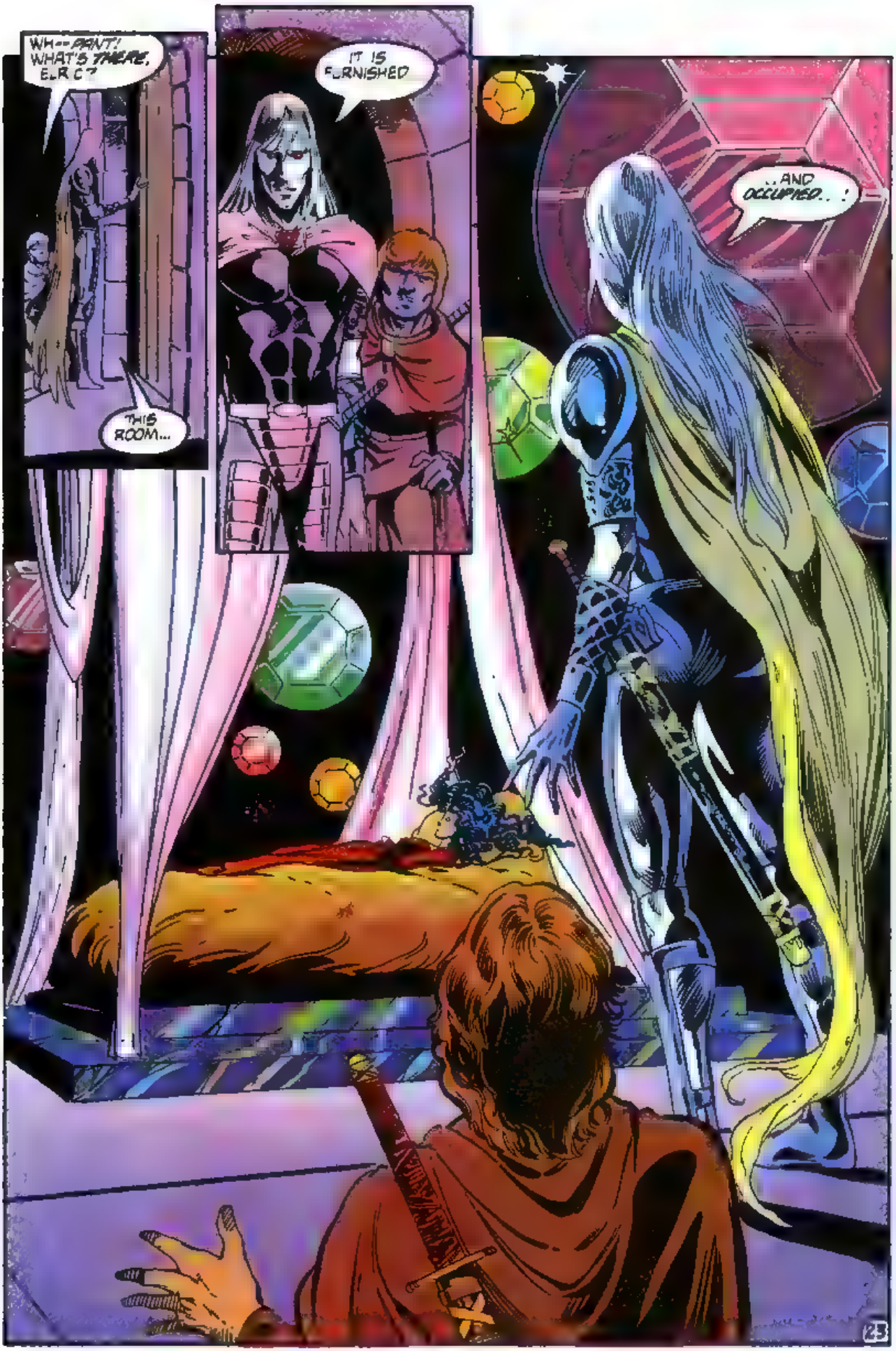
A DAY PASSES.
A NIGHT PASSES.
ANOTHER DAY...
...ANOTHER DAY.

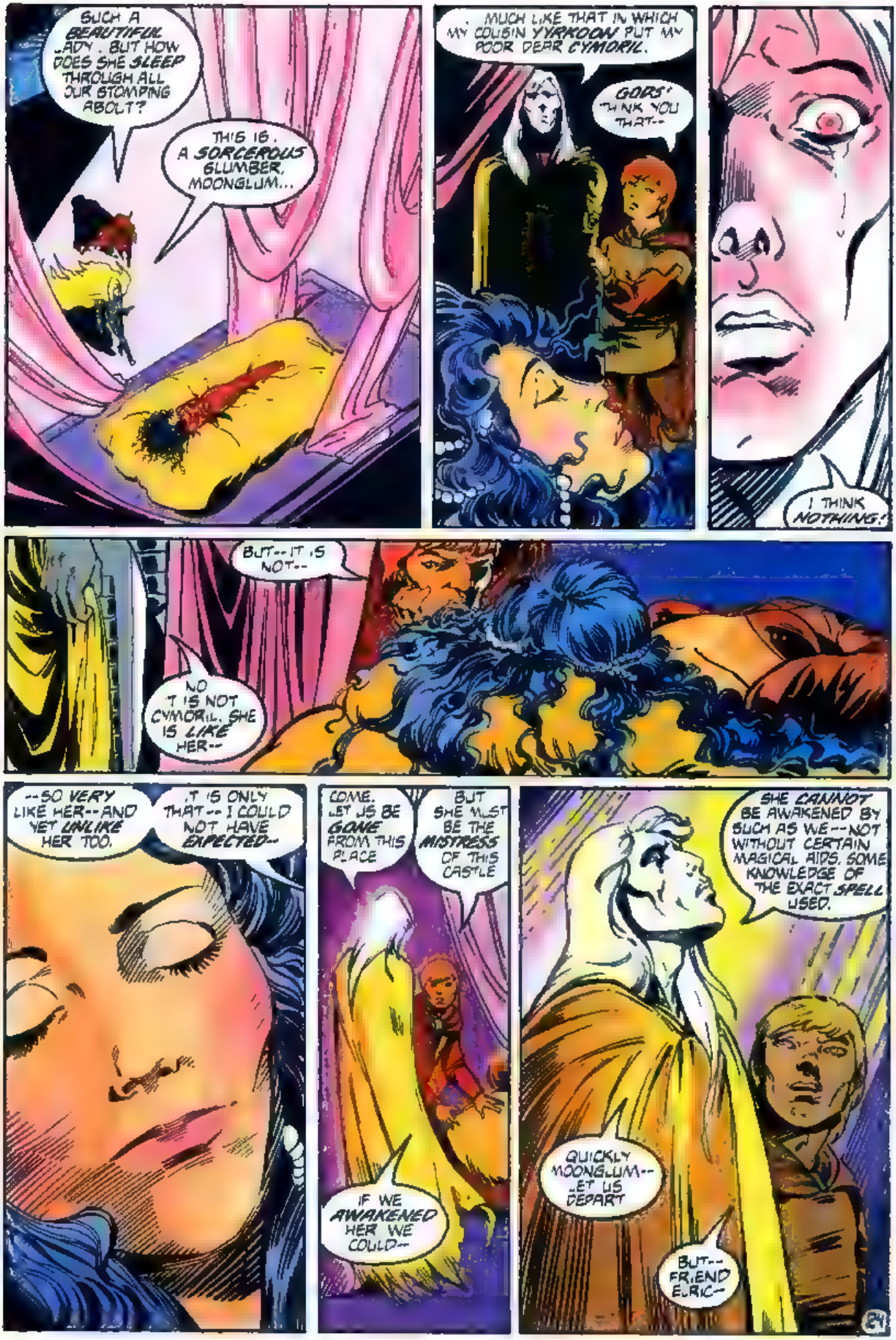

AND WHEN THE SUN RISES AGAIN..
E-ELRIC...?
UHUHH
THAT'S THE WAY I JUST KEEP MORNING. DON'T DIE ON ME.
WE'LL SEE IF THE LORD OF THIS CASTLE IS AT HOME...
HE MUST BE
ELSE WHY THE GREAT LOG FIRE IN YONDER HEARTH?
GREETINGS TO THE MASTER OF THIS HALL, FROM MOONGLUM OF ELWHER AND ELRIC OF MELNIBONE!
WE CRAVE YOUR HOSPITALITY. FOR WE ARE LOST IN YOUR--
MY LORD--?
WARM YOUR BONES HERE BY THE FIRE--
--WHILE I SEEK THE FOLKS WHO MUST LIVE HERE.
19

WHAT... FOUND YOU ..?
FEELING BETTER EH? GOOD
I FOUND NOUGHT. NO SERVANTS...NO MASTER I AM A LITTLE NERVOUS ABOUT IT I MUST ADMIT...
...AYE AND A LITTLE HUNGRY, TOO
I'LL SEEK THE CASTLE'S PANTRY
IF DANGER IS TO COME WE'D DO AS WELL TO FACE IT ON FULL STOMACHS.
AHHH
LET'S SEE WHAT'S INSIDE YOU, LITTLE JAR
MMMMM
20

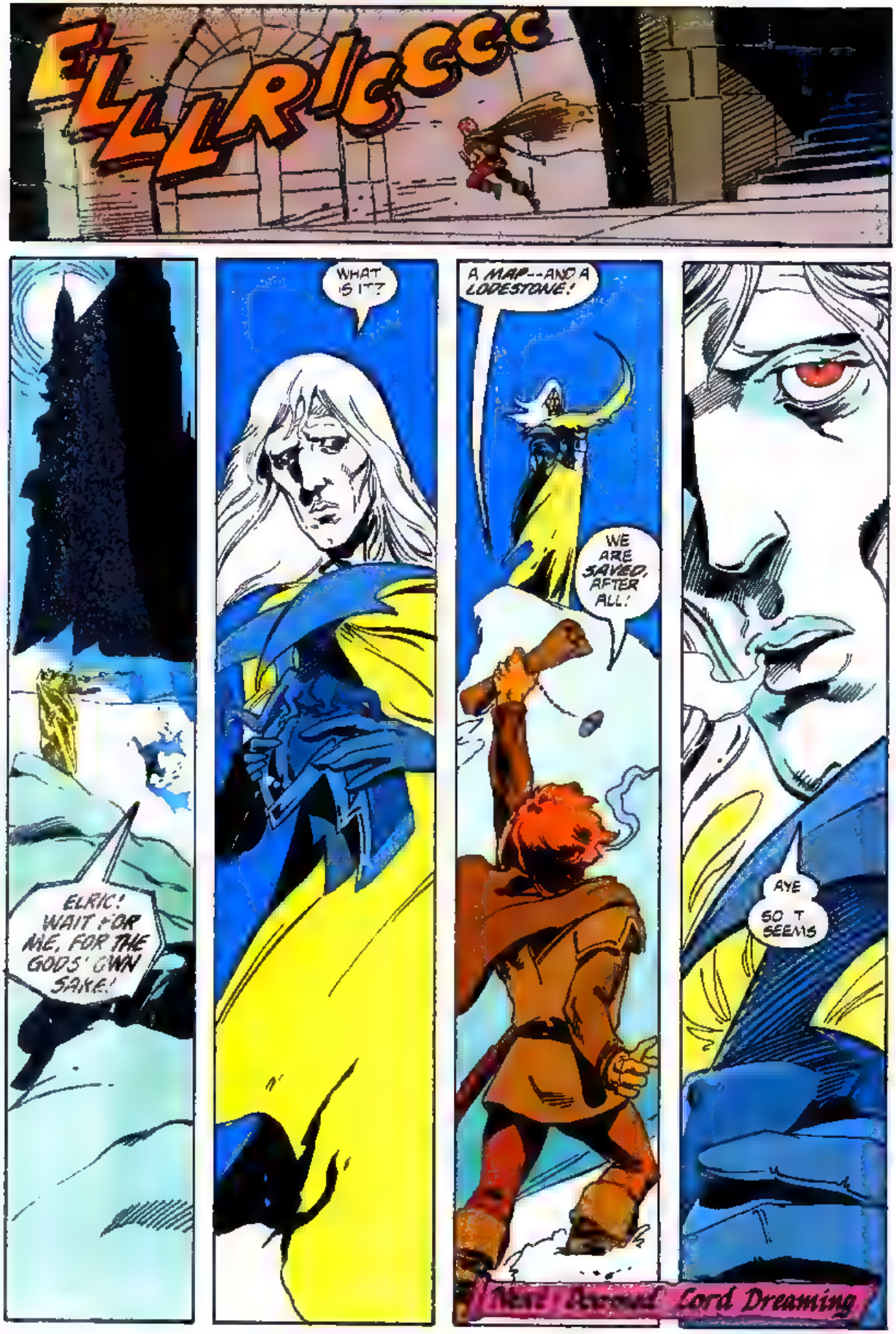
WINE, ELRIC
BEST I'VE EVER TASTED--- BUT THEN I WAS A BIT THIRSTIER THAN USUAL
HERE HAVE SOME.
YOU ARE A GOOD FRIEND
I WONDER WHY
YOU SAY STRANGE THINGS SOMETIMES, LORD ELRIC.
REST I WILL ROAST SOME OF THE VENISON I FOUND IN THE PANTRY.
AFTER DINNER
MOONGLUM... I RAN AWAY FROM SHARILLA OF THE DANCING MIST WHO LOVED ME DEARLY.
I CAUSED THE DEATH...OF CYMORIL...WHOM I LOVED.
I FLED QUEEN YISHANA... WHO OFFERED ME HER KINGDOM TO RULE.
I OFTEN WONDER WHY.. YOU AND I STAY WITH EACH OTHER.
I WONDER.. IF YOU MIGHT NOT BE BETTER OFF IF WE WENT OUR SEPARATE WAYS.
SNORK
BUT YOU DON'T HEAR ME.. DO YOU?
PERHAPS. IT IS JUST AS WELL..
21

LATE MORNING...
I FOUND SIGNS OF SOME HORSES KEPT IN THE STABLE RECENTLY BUT THERE ARE NONE THERE NOW
THE ONLY OTHER WAY TO TRAVEL OVER SNOW IS BY SKIS
I WILL GO WITH YOU.
I WILL SEARCH THE UPPER LEVELS ...SEE WHAT I CAN FIND
PERHAPS THERE ARE SOME SOMEWHERE ABOUT.
A MAP AND A LODE-STONE WOULD SPEED OUR PROGRESS TOO.
SOME TIME LATER...
NO GEAR OF ANY KIND.
AND YET THERE IS A STRONG SENSE--EVEN EVIDENCE --THAT THE CASTLE IS INHABITED.
PERHAPS-- GULP. --WE SHALL HAVE TO WALK AFTER ALL.
THOSE STAIRS...
WE'LL TRY THEM... AND IF THERE'S NOTHING AT THE TOP OF THEM...
THEN WE SHALL COUNT OUR QUEST A FAILURE
22


WH--AIN'T! WHAT'S THEARE, E.R.C.?
THIS ROOM...
IT IS FURNISHED
..AND OCCUPIED..!


SUCH A BEAUTIFUL LADY. BUT HOW DOES SHE SLEEP THROUGH ALL OUR STOMPING ABOUT?
THIS IS A SORCEROUS SLUMBER, MOONGLUM...
MUCH LIKE THAT IN WHICH MY COUSIN YYRKOON PUT MY POOR DEAR CYMORIL.
GORS! THINK YOU THAT--
I THINK NOTHING!
BUT--IT IS NOT--
NO IT IS NOT CYMORIL. SHE IS LIKE HER--
--SO VERY LIKE HER--AND YET UNLIKE HER TOO.
IT IS ONLY THAT--I COULD NOT HAVE EXPECTED--
COME. LET US BE GONE FROM THIS PLACE
BUT SHE MUST BE THE MISTRESS OF THIS CASTLE
IF WE AWAKENED HER WE COULD--
SHE CANNOT BE AWAKENED BY SUCH AS WE--NOT WITHOUT CERTAIN MAGICAL AIDS, SOME KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXACT SPELL USED.
QUICKLY MOONGLUM--LET US DEPART
BUT--FRIEND ELRIC--
24

THEN I SHALL GO ALONE!
--I DIDN'T MEAN--
MILADY?
MILADY.. IF YOU COULD ONLY..
COLD. COLD AS DEATH
YET SHE LIVES.
I SUPPOSE I MIGHT AS WELL--EH? WHAT'S THIS?
A MAP--WITH THIS CASTLE MARKED UPON IT --LIKEWISE THE ZAPHRA-TREPEK RIVER--
--AND THIS LODE-STONE. ON A LONG SILVER CHAIN!
'TIS AS IF SOME-ONE READ OUR MINDS.
ELRIC!
25


ELRICCCC
ELRIC! WAIT FOR ME, FOR THE GODS' OWN SAKE!
WHAT IS IT?
A MAP--AND A LODESTONE!
WE ARE SAVED, AFTER ALL!
AYE SO IT SEEMS
Next: Across the Dreaming Lord

Melnibonean Mailbox!

HOW TO BREAK INTO COMICS LETTERCOLS

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So, send in those cards and letters today!

Dear Laurel,

Issue 4's cover was awful (but then, I guess it was supposed to be, eh?) but once inside the covers, I encountered the most magnificent artwork and adaptation that has yet been my pleasure to experience.

For once, Elric was drawn in a consistent manner and the manner was sublime! The darkening under the albino's eyes was excellently done and managed to suggest any number of moods that he was feeling at the time.

Congratulations!

Blayne Haddad
500 E. Orangethorpe
Org 7612
Anaheim, CA 92801

To all my Good Folks,
Abiding.
I have a
confession to make
unto you,
I am very much
in love with Elric,
and I wish, very much
to bear him
upon my breast.
Alas,
All where that I have
a seeking, I could not
find an image of
that man from
Melniboné
that I could bear
upon my breast
Could some
good folk please
tell me where I
could seek a T-shirt
with Elric upon
it?

That would make me the happiest of maidens!

Pam Tuck
Box 162
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Alas, dear maid,
I bid you fair.
There are no shirts to be had.
But the word has gone forth,
and the wizards that care
say all — "maybe next year!"

Hmm, that doesn't quite scan. In any case, there are no T-shirts available right now. But the people I talked to commented, "What an interesting idea!" So... maybe later.

Dear First,

It was about three years ago when I first read the "Elric Saga." Since then, I've read all of Moorcock's books concerning the concept of the "Eternal Champions." I'd just like to say that I think your work of adapting them is fantastic! The artwork, the lettering — everything is just terrific! Congratulations guys, for a job well done. Keep up the good work!

There's one more thing I'd like to add. In 1980, Blue Öyster Cult put out an Album called "Cultösaurus Erectus." On it, there is a tune called "Black Blade." Seeing as how Moorcock helped BÖC write the lyrics for it, it is unmistakably about Elric. I just thought this bit of info might be interesting to you and all the other Elric fans. Once again, keep up the good work!

Rob Taggart
128 Van Avenue
Greensburg, PA 15601

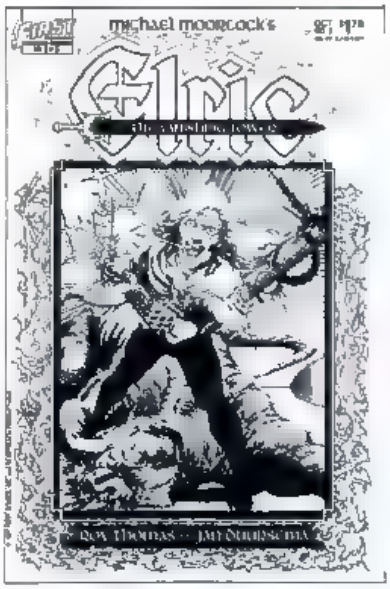
I haven't followed BÖC for a while and wasn't aware of the Elric reference. However, I had heard that ***Michael Moorcock*** *was a member of a Bristish band called "Hawkwind," and had played an instrument with them. Can any one supply further details? Is he still playing with the band? and what instrument?*

Dear First Comics,

You really should make all the Elric books into graphic novels. All of them! Same goes with Hawkmoon and Corum!

Brent Johnson
2454 Forbes Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Actually, we intend to. The plan is that sometime after each adaptation of a particular book we will gather it into a graphic novel format. I can't tell you exactly when ***Sailor on the Seas of Fate*** *will be coming, but stay tuned to the First Notes column and this letters page. Don't worry, we'll let you know.*



NEXT ISSUE: The sleeping sorceress entrusts Elric with a mission — to retrieve a magical pouch and recover a Nanorion, a gemstone capable of countering any enchantment. The one is protected by a demon and the other is a demon's *heart!* By **Roy Thomas** and **Jan Duursema**.

—Laurel Fitch

THE FIRST CHOICE KEEPS GETTING BETTER!

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BADGER
BRAVESTARR
CORUM
DREADSTAR
DYNAMO JOE
ELRIC
EVANGELINE
GHOSTBUSTERS
GRIMJACK
HAWKMOON
JON SABLE, FREELANCE
LONE WOLF AND CUB
NEXUS
PSYCHOBLAST
SHATTER
WHISPER

GRAPHIC NOVELS

AMERICAN FLAGG!: HARD TIMES
BEOWULF
ELRIC OF MELNIBONÉ
THE ENCHANTED APPLES OF OZ
THE SECRET ISLAND OF OZ
THE ORIGINAL NEXUS
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
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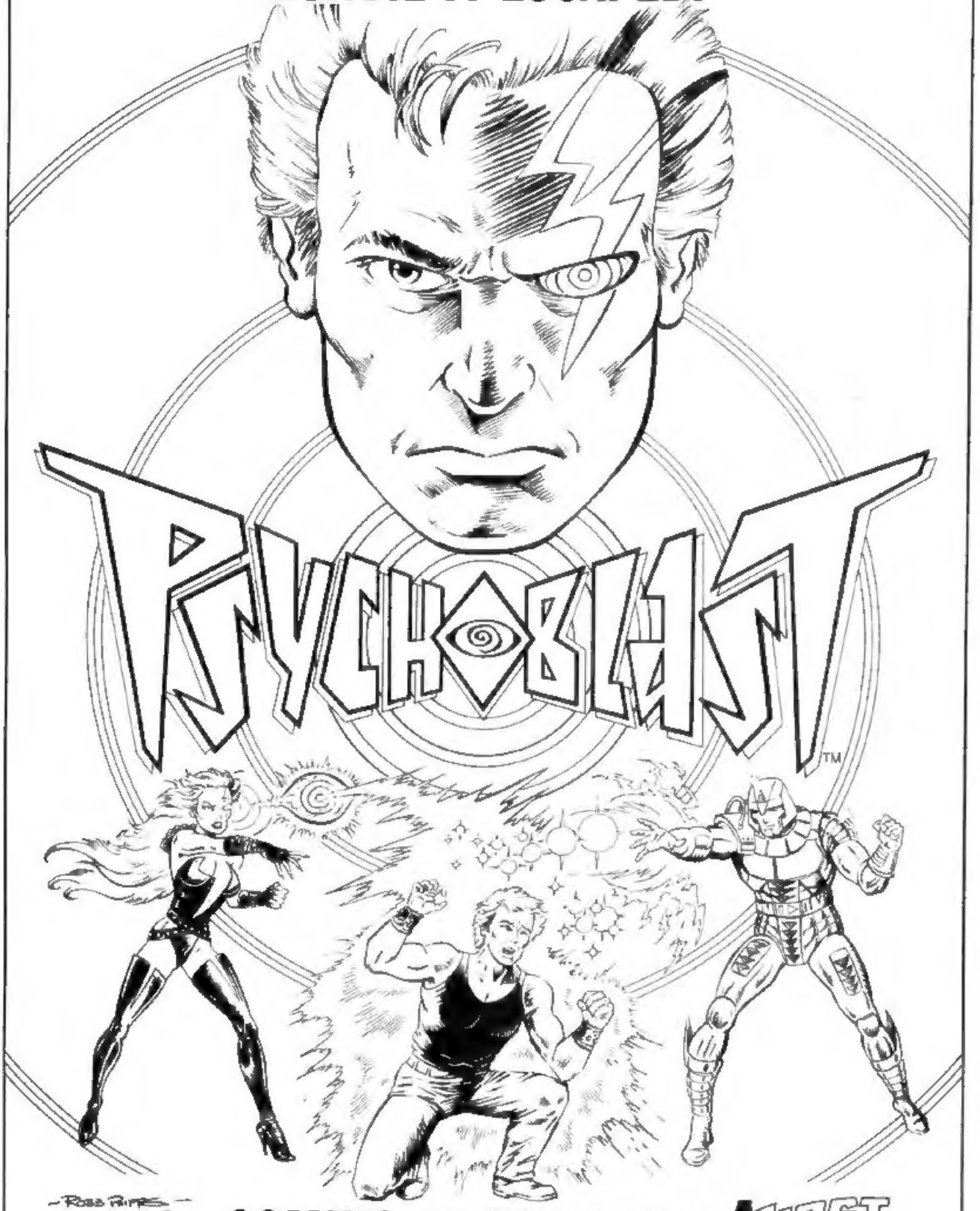
HE THOUGHT IT WAS ALL IN HIS MIND ...UNTIL IT ESCAPED!



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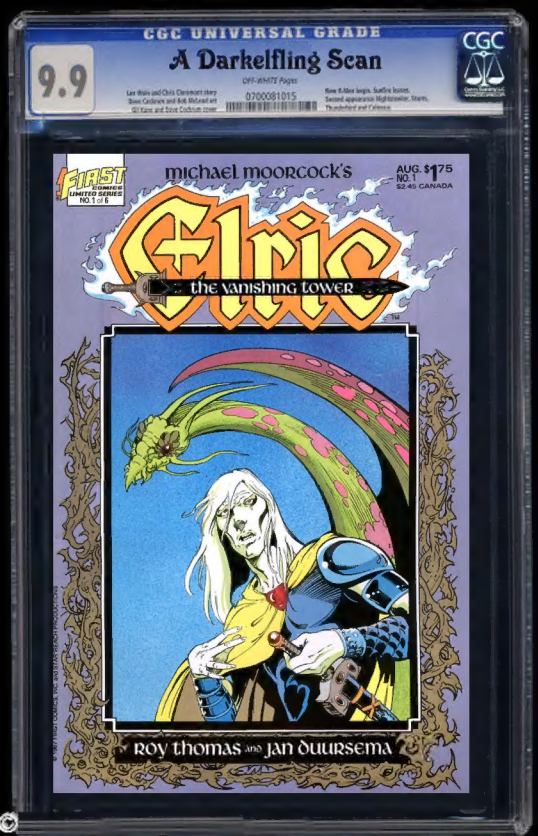

A Darkelfling scan

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